

In the Claims

1. (currently amended) A method of improving airline luggage inspection by a luggage screening entity ~~making such inspection secure yet non-intrusive~~, comprising:

making available to consumers a special lock ~~available to airline travelers~~, the special lock having a combination lock portion and ~~having~~ a master key lock portion, the master key lock portion for receiving a master key that can open the master key lock portion of any special lock of this type, the special lock designed to be applied to an individual piece of airline luggage, the special lock also having an indicia thereon associated therewith that matches an indicia previously provided to the luggage screening entity, which special lock the luggage screening entity has agreed to process in accordance with a special procedure, conveying to luggage purchasers and to the luggage screening authority that the special lock is a lock that the luggage screening authority has agreed not to break, and

~~providing the luggage screening authority, directly or indirectly, with the access to the master key, said access being exclusive except for a manufacturer of said master key and/or a provider of the special lock to airline travelers and/or a provider of the master key to the luggage screening authority,~~

marketing the special lock to the consumers in a manner that conveys to the consumers that the special lock will be subjected by the luggage screening entity to the special procedure, and

the luggage screening entity acting pursuant to a prior agreement to look for the indicia while screening luggage and, upon finding said indicia on an individual piece of

luggage, to use the master key previously provided to the luggage screening entity to, if necessary, open the individual piece of luggage.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the master key lock portion includes a key hole on a bottom of the special lock that receives the master key.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein a step of making available to consumers ~~airline travelers~~ a special lock involves mass producing the special lock and selling the special lock to the consumers ~~airline travelers~~.

4. (currently amended) A method of improving airline luggage inspection by a luggage screening entity ~~making such inspection secure yet non-intrusive~~, comprising:

making available to consumers a special lock ~~available to airline travelers~~, the ~~special lock~~ having a first lock portion and ~~having~~ a master key lock portion, the master key lock portion for receiving a master key that can open the master key lock portion of any special lock of this type, the special lock designed to be applied to an individual piece of airline luggage, the special lock also having an indicia thereon associated therewith that matches an indicia previously provided to the luggage screening entity, which special lock the luggage screening entity has agreed to process in accordance with a special procedure, ~~conveying to luggage purchasers and to the luggage screening authority that the special lock is a lock that the luggage screening authority has agreed not to break, and~~

~~providing the luggage screening authority, directly or indirectly, with the access~~

~~to the master key, said access being exclusive except for a manufacturer of said master key and/or a provider of the special lock to airline travelers and/or a provider of the master key to the luggage screening authority,~~

marketing the special lock to the consumers in a manner that conveys to the consumers that the special lock will be subjected by the luggage screening entity to the special procedure, and

the luggage screening entity acting pursuant to a prior agreement to look for the indicia while screening luggage and, upon finding said indicia on an individual piece of luggage, to use the master key previously provided to the luggage screening entity to, if necessary, open the individual piece of luggage.

5. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein the indicia is located directly on the special lock.

6. (new) The method of claim 5, wherein a step of making available to consumers a special lock involves mass producing the special lock and selling the special lock to the consumers.

7. (new) The method of claim 4, wherein the indicia is located directly on the special lock.

8. (new) A method of improving airline luggage inspection by a luggage screening entity, comprising:

making available to consumers a special lock having a combination lock portion and a master key lock portion, the master key lock portion for receiving a master key that can open the master key lock portion of any special lock of this type, the special lock designed to be applied to an individual piece of airline luggage, the special lock also having an indicia associated therewith that corresponds with a corresponding indicia previously provided to the luggage screening entity, which special lock the luggage screening entity has agreed to process in accordance with a special procedure,

marketing the special lock to the consumers in a manner that conveys to the consumers that the special lock will be subjected by the luggage screening entity to the special procedure, and

the luggage screening entity acting pursuant to a prior agreement to look for the corresponding indicia while screening luggage and, upon finding said corresponding indicia on an individual piece of luggage, to use the master key previously provided to the luggage screening entity to, if necessary, open the individual piece of luggage.

9. (new) A method of improving airline luggage inspection by a luggage screening entity, comprising:

making available to consumers a special lock having a first lock portion and a master key lock portion, the master key lock portion for receiving a master key that can open the master key lock portion of any special lock of this type, the special lock designed to be applied to an individual piece of airline luggage, the special lock also having an indicia associated therewith that corresponds with a corresponding indicia previously provided to the luggage screening entity, which special lock the luggage

screening entity has agreed to process in accordance with a special procedure,

marketing the special lock to the consumers in a manner that conveys to the consumers that the special lock will be subjected by the luggage screening entity to the special procedure, and

the luggage screening entity acting pursuant to a prior agreement to look for the corresponding indicia while screening luggage and, upon finding said corresponding indicia on an individual piece of luggage, to use the master key previously provided to the luggage screening entity to, if necessary, open the individual piece of luggage.